



CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

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JOSEPH M. BUTLER, JR.
Mayor

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
Contact: Mayor's Office

UNITED WAY SELECTED AS THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT AGENCY TO COORDINATE WATERTOWN'S POVERTY REDUCTION INITIATIVE

As many of you know, Watertown was selected as one of 16 communities statewide to participate in Governor Cuomo's Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI). I am pleased to announce that I have selected The United Way of Northern New York as the non-profit agency to lead our efforts to combat poverty in Watertown and administer the \$1,000,000 that has been awarded to the City of Watertown in the Governor's 2017 budget.

Funding for this initiative will be provided by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and the United Way will work the OTDA to administer this contract and develop an innovative plan to reduce the number of households residing in poverty.

The United Way, in concert with my office, will establish a task force of local community stakeholders comprised of the following: individuals living in poverty, non-profits already dedicated to servicing the impoverished, local school district officials, health service providers, public safety officials, economic development representatives, faith-based community organizations, employers, elected officials and local social service agencies. The Task Force will be charged with developing and executing a plan to address poverty in the City of Watertown. It is the intent of this initiative to work with the non-profit agencies already dedicated to combating poverty and the programs they employ, as well as craft new strategies that approach poverty from a variety of perspectives. While we fully understand the aged old problem of poverty will continue to be a challenge for communities like Watertown, we are optimistic this opportunity will make a difference for many in our community who spend every day trying to deal with the challenges that come with being impoverished.

I thank the many agencies and individuals already dedicated to improving the health and welfare of our community. I believe their expertise and experience in dealing with poverty will assist the work of the Task Force and result in a collaborative effort where our community can unite in the fight against poverty in our City and truly make a difference.

I extend my thanks to Assemblywoman Addie Russell for her advocacy on this issue as it relates to Watertown and for Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature for adopting this in their 2017 budget.

As always, I welcome your comments and look forward to working with the Task Force to improve the health and welfare of a City I am privileged to serve.

For further information or questions, contact the Mayor's Office at 785-7720.